



COMMANDER NAVY REGION HAWAII

SAFETY NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2004

www.hawaii.navy.mil/Safety/index.htm



Recreation and Off-Duty Safety (RODS)

RODS is a part of our lives in which we have a great deal of mishaps but take few preventive measures because its not regulated (NOT THE LAW). Yet regardless of whether we're on or off duty, your workplace still feels the impact of your absence. As we all know, most accidents are preventable. You're probably familiar with the term, "Guns don't kill, people do." This is the same analogy that could be used when you are not wearing your seatbelt while driving or you're not wearing a helmet on a motorcycle and you get into an accident. In California, shortly after fighting the helmet law, actor Gary Busey got into a motorcycle accident and hit his head on the curb. Was his head injury preventable? The answer is simple...Absolutely! Some motorcycle mishaps can be avoided by taking such preventive measures as wearing a helmet, just as RODS mishaps can be prevented through proper stretching prior to exercise, using breakaway bases when playing softball or baseball, using safety equipment where and when it is needed, and receiving safety training.

When it comes to safety the idea is that if we hear it enough, eventually the majority of us will "just do it." While the Region Safety Department addresses off-duty safety during Indoctrination Training and further stresses it during Operational Risk Management (ORM) Training, it is the supervisor's responsibility to provide quarterly RODS training to all military personnel. Participation of civilian personnel is not required by instruction but highly recommended. The training should be seasonally and geographically appropriate (e.g., don't preach snow-skiing safety here on Oahu). Training records should be maintained by each command for all personnel for 2 years. Documentation will include a log of scheduled training, dates of training, and names of attendees. A copy of the completed training roster should be forwarded to the Region Safety Department.

Both the Region Safety website (www.hawaii.navy.mil/Safety/) and the Navy Safety Center website (<http://safetycenter.navy.mil/>) serve as valuable resources for all your training needs. Both sites provide a wide range of topics to discuss in your quarterly RODS training and the Region site also has a sign-in sheet that you can use. If you

need further assistance you can contact the Region Safety Department at 474-3953.

Bottom line...we can't afford to lose any of our precious assets...YOU! Safety must be part of our every day lives, not only in combat but at home, at play, and while on vacation as well. This won't always come through lectures and statistics. It takes an overall attitude change of each individual. We must incorporate safety into our way of thinking through the use of ORM. Think before you act!



Driving In the Rain

Losing control of your car on wet pavement is a frightening experience. Unfortunately, it can happen unless you take preventive measures.

You can prevent skids by driving slowly and carefully, especially on curves. Steer and brake with a light touch. When you need to stop or slow, do not brake hard or lock the wheels and risk a skid. Maintain mild pressure on the brake pedal.

If you do find yourself in a skid, remain calm, ease your foot off the gas, and carefully steer in the direction you want the front of the car to go. For cars without anti-lock brakes, avoid using your brakes. This procedure, known as "steering into the skid," will bring the back end of your car in line with the front. If your car has ABS, brake firmly as you "steer into the skid."

While skids on wet pavement may be frightening, hydroplaning is completely nerve-wracking. Hydroplaning happens when the water in front of your tires builds up faster than your car's weight can push it out of the way. The water pressure causes your car to rise up and slide on a thin layer of water between your tires and the road. At this point, your car can be completely out of contact with the road, and you are in danger of skidding or drifting out of your lane, or even off the road.

To avoid hydroplaning, keep your tires properly inflated, maintain good tread on your tires and replace them when necessary, slow down when roads are wet, and stay away from puddles. Try to drive in the tire tracks left by the cars in front of you.

If you find yourself hydroplaning, do not brake or turn suddenly. This could throw your car into a skid. Ease your foot off the gas until the car slows and you can feel the road again.

If you need to brake, do it gently with light pumping actions. If your car has anti-lock brakes, then brake normally; the car's computer will mimic a pumping action, when necessary.

A defensive driver adjusts his or her speed to the wet road conditions in time to avoid having to use any of these measures!

HOW GOOD DRIVERS GET KILLED

By Ralph Kinney Bennett (Readers Digest)

On a sunny May afternoon, contractor Philip Swann, 48, drove west on two-lane Route 234 toward his home in Newburg, Md. Three employees were in the pickup truck with him, hitching a ride home. Swann was looking forward to dinner with his wife and three sons.

As Swann headed west, an eastbound Buick veered onto his side of the road. At the wheel was a 16-year-old girl driving on her learner's permit. She was trying to pass a minivan, but had failed to see Swann's pickup. The vehicles slammed into each other head-on. Swann's truck turned upside down and exploded in flames. Swann and one of his passengers were killed; the other two were severely burned. The teenager and her mother, who was also in the car, were badly injured.

A simple error on a clear day, by a novice driver on a straight stretch of road, cost two men their lives and left three young boys fatherless. Every day in America good drivers, obeying speed limits and the rules of the road, are nonetheless injured or killed by careless, drunk, inexperienced or reckless drivers.

So how do these roadway accidents happen? And is there anything you can do to avoid them?

Reader's Digest asked statisticians at the National Safety Council to analyze the nation's 41,611 traffic deaths in 1999 (the latest available data). They were asked to determine common ways that "good" drivers -- any of those found not at fault in an accident -- were killed. Here are the sobering facts.

Head-On Impact. The kind of accident that killed Philip Swann and his friend is a top killer of innocent drivers. **Head-ons killed 42 percent** of the good drivers in our survey. For those behind the wheel, death by an oncoming auto can be particularly devastating because of the laws of physics: the speed of both cars multiplies the violence of the collision.

And they are often the most sudden and unavoidable. "It doesn't appear that Swann had time to take evasive action. It was over in a second," says Maryland State Police Sgt. Randy Stephens, an accident investigator.

Surprisingly, our study shows that only **six percent of head-on collisions** were **caused by drivers passing at inopportune times. Twenty percent occurred on curves where often a driver going too fast veered into the opposite lane. But the great majority, 63 percent, happened when drivers were steering straight.** The crashes were likely caused by drivers who were distracted by other things (kids, changing a CD, talking on a cell phone), or who fell asleep, or nearly so, and drifted into oncoming traffic.

We found that **more than half of these head-ons occurred in daylight and more than 80 percent of them in dry weather.** "That tracks with our experience," says Stephens. "More fatal accidents of every type seem to occur in nice weather when drivers may relax their guard; **in bad weather, the majority of drivers tend to be more cautious, more attentive.**"

Is there anything you can do to reduce the risk of meeting another car head-on? There is one measure that eliminates much of the risk. Forget the scenic route and head for the highway. Use major highways where traffic flow is separated by medians, and access is controlled by on- and off-ramps.

Deadliest Sign

Perhaps the most familiar of all traffic signs -- the **red octagonal stop sign -- turns out to be a significant risk to good drivers.**

Sixteen percent of drivers in our analysis were killed because another driver either did not see, purposely ignored, or showed poor judgment at a stop sign. For example, says Lt. Scott Hunter, traffic-safety coordinator for the North Carolina Highway Patrol, drivers often stop or slow at a sign and then pull out without bothering to check the intersection for an oncoming car. Or, they misjudge an approaching car's distance and speed and pull in front of it.

Hunter and other police officers advise extra wariness when approaching intersections, even when you have the right of way. Their best tip: as you approach and see a car about to cross or enter the road you're on, don't just look at the car to see if it comes to a full stop. Check the driver too. Is he or she looking your way? Does he or she appear distracted? It could be your best warning of an accident waiting to happen.

Red for Danger

It was a clear June evening in Boca Raton, Fla.; the sun was still up. Neil Marvin was at the wheel of his Mercury Grand Marquis with his wife, Paulette, and four friends.

Marvin, 66, stopped at a traffic light, and then pulled out routinely when it changed to green. Just then, a Mercedes-Benz driven by Robert Carratelli ran the red light at a speed estimated by police at 80 m.p.h.

The Mercedes slammed into the left side of the Mercury, instantly killing Marvin, his wife and all four friends. Carratelli, who had minor injuries, is now appealing a vehicular-homicide conviction.

Red-light running turned out to be another deadly accident for innocent drivers, killing eight percent of them. When the [Insurance Institute for Highway Safety](#) monitored a busy intersection in Arlington County, Virginia, for several months, they found a driver running the light every 12 minutes on average. It was as high as once every five minutes during peak rush hours. "That's more than 100 chances a day for an unsuspecting motorist to become a crash victim," says Institute safety expert Richard Retting.

Red-light running is on the rise nationwide. In a six-year study, the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety found that **deadly**

crashes at red lights increased at more than three times the rate of all other types of fatal auto accidents.

To avoid them, the best advice remains the lesson motorists learned from their high school driver-ed teachers: "**Even when your light has changed to green, take one more look both ways before proceeding,**" says Lt. Steve Farago, chief traffic officer of the Mesa, Ariz., Police Department. "You've got to protect yourself. Too many drivers consider the yellow light a 'last chance' to get through an intersection rather than a caution signal. We're trying to cut down on red-light accidents by reminding drivers to brake on yellow, stop on red."

Even if you're tooling around a shopping-mall parking lot, there are traffic signs you must obey. Yet many drivers simply blow them off. As a result, a variety of other "failure to yield" collisions -- beyond traffic signs and stop lights -- make up smaller percentages of driver deaths, but taken together, they can be serious killers. And they occur where there are no stop signs or traffic lights, at unmarked side roads, in driveways, and at entries to shopping-center parking lots. These kinds of **failure-to-yield accidents took the lives of 11 percent of our good drivers who had the right of way.**

The **most important conclusion to draw from the statistics compiled by the National Safety Council is this: stick to major highways whenever you can. An overwhelming 86 percent of traffic fatalities happen on side roads and byways. Only 14 percent occur on major highways,** according to statistics from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

Says driving-safety consultant Lawrence Lonero, of Northpoint Associates in Ontario, Canada: "My wife and I took a trip throughout the eastern and southeastern United States on the interstates and, amazing as it may seem, we never saw an accident in 5000 miles of driving."

And **most obvious of all: wear your seat belt, all the time. Period!** The [National Highway Traffic Safety Administration](#) says **seat belts reduce the risk of fatal injury by 45 percent in a car and 60 percent in a light truck.**

But even with every safety precaution taken, says Gary Magwood, a driving educator and a contributor to [Drivers.com](#), a driver-safety website, motorists must remember that the driver's seat is an inherently unsafe place to be. "**Learn to use your eyes to look far down the road. Learn to spot problems before they happen,**" he says. "And remember that the safest vehicles on the best-designed highways on clear, sunny days are driven by fallible human beings who can crash into each other."

Be Safe!!

"School House" Training Calendar for March 2004

(held at Bldg. X-11 unless otherwise noted)

Fall Protection Training

5 Mar - 0730-1100

Safety Indoctrination

PWC/PACDIV

9 Mar - 0800-0930

Lockout/Tagout

11 Mar - 0715-1500

AAA DIP

NAVSTA

15 Mar - 0700-1600

Respirator

PWC Bldg. 40

18 Mar - 0730-0930

Motorcycle BRC Course

25 Mar - 0700-1500

Motorcycle BRC Course

Ford Island

26 Mar - 0700-1600

AAA Offender

31 Mar - 0700-1530

Safety Director

(808) 474-3953, Ext 358

Mgmt Analyst

(808) 474-3953, Ext 358

Hazard Control Division

(808) 474-3953, Ext 355

(808) 474-3953, Ext 357

Technical Division

(808) 474-3953, Ext 365